

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LOME 01149 232345Z

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00

/017 W

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R 231650Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9185

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA MILI TO

SUBJECT: OPERATION CROSSROADS AFRICA AND WEST POINT CADETS

REF: STATE 120100

1. EMBASSY HAS CONSIDERED PROPOSAL (REFTEL) CAREFULLY AND ON BALANCE SEES NO SERIOUS PROBLEM IN ALLOWING WEST POINT CADETS TO PARTICIPATE IN 1975 OPERATION CROSSROADS AFRICA (OCA) PROGRAM IN TOGO SUBJECT TO CONSIDERATIONS SET FORTH BELOW. (EMBASSY WOULD, HOWEVER, LIKE TO BE INFORMED IF CADETS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN SUCH PROGRAMS IN TOGO HERETOFORE. WOULD ALSO LIKE TO KNOW HOW QUESTION OF DISCLOSURE OF CADETS' MILITARY STATUS WAS HANDLED EITHER IN TOGO OR NIEGHBORING COUNTRIES.) ASSUME, OF COURSE, CADETS WILL BE CAREFULLY SELECTED FOR TACT AND DISCRETION AND WILL BE WELL BRIEFED BY ARMY ON HOST COUNTRY SENSITIVITIES.

2. IN EMBASSY'S VIEW IT WOULD BE SERIOUS MISTAKE TO ATTEMPT CONCEAL CADETS' STATUS FROM GOT BY ANY KIND OF SUBTERFUGE OR DELIBERATE OMISSION, SINCE DISCLOSURE (ACCIDENTAL OR OTHERWISE) AFTER ARRIVAL COULD HAVE EXTREMELY EMBARRASSING CONSEQUENCES. IT WOULD BE FAR WISER, FOR EXAMPLE, IF OCA LET TOGOLESE EMBASSY WASHINGTON KNOW IN LOW-KEY, ROUTINE MANNER THAT PROJECT

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GROUP WOULD CONSIST OF SO MANY STUDENTS FROM SO MANY SCHOOLS,

WITH MENTION OF USMA WEST POINT GIVEN NO MORE AND NO LESS PROMINENCE THAN SAY PURDUE OR IOWA STATE. CADETS' VISA APPLICATIONS ALSO SHOULD BE PLAIN TRUTH WITH NO MORE AND NO LESS INFORMATION THAN NORMALLY EXPECTED. IT SHOULD BE LEFT, TO MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE, TO OCA TO ANSWER QUESTIONS TOGOLESE EMBASSY MIGHT RAISE ABOUT CADETS AND TO LEAVE IT TO THAT EMBASSY TO ARRANGE MATTERS WITH GOT. IF TOGOLESE EMBASSY OR GOT REACTS SUSPICIOUSLY, OCA SHOULD NOT PRESS POINT BUT OFFER TO SUBSTITUTE CIVILIAN STUDENTS.

3. ALTERNATIVE TO ROUTINE DISCLOSURE WITH "NOTHING TO HIDE" ATTITUDE IS SOME KIND OF COVER, WHICH EMBASSY THINKS IS UNWORKABLE AND NOT WORTH RISKS TO WHICH IT EXPOSES CADETS, OTHER MEMBERS OF GROUP, OCA ITSELF AND, OF COURSE, USG. IF GOT ACCEPTS CADETS AS BONA FIDE MEMBERS OF GROUP AT OUTSET, THERE WILL BE NO PROBLEMS; IF IT OBJECTS AT OUTSET, HARM TO US-TOGO RELATIONS WOULD BE NEGIGLIBLE; IF IT "UNCOVERS" CADETS IN TOGO, ITS REACTIONS COULD BE SERIOUS INDEED.

4. SUGGEST AF/W CONTACT AMBASSADOR RAWLS FOR HER CONCURRENCE WITH ABOVE POSITION.

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Message Attributes

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